

REMARKS

Independent Claim 1 is amended to include the limitation of previously presented Claim 6. Independent Claim 10 is amended to include the limitations of Claim 48.

The Office Action of March 17, 2006 rejected at least a portion of previously presented claims under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting in view of co-pending application 10/089,064. Applicants submit that the filing of a Terminal Disclaimer in the co-pending application 10/089,064 obviates the obviousness-type double patenting rejection and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

The amendments to the claims leaves pending only the subject matter not rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 or 35 U.S.C. § 102 in the Office Action of March 17, 2006. The amendment to the claims is made without prejudice and without disclaimer of subject matter. Because the Office Action did not reject the presently pending subject matter in view of any prior art or for any other reason other than obviousness-type double patenting, Applicants submit that all now-pending claims are in condition for allowance.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Applicants submit herewith an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) citing two U.S. patents (i.e., U.S. 6,458,172 and 6,800,103). Applicants request the Office acknowledge consideration of the references provided on the PTO-1449 by returning a signed, dated and initialed copy thereof to Applicants' U.S. representative with the next communication from the Office.

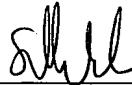
Applicants submit herewith a certified English translation of the priority document (i.e., German Application No. 19948114.8 filed on October 6, 1999).

Applicants' cancellation of certain claims and an amendment of other claims to draw the invention to subject matter not rejected by the Office as indefinite and/or obvious, is not an admission that the Office's position in regards to the patentability of these claims is correct. Applicants amend the claims without prejudice and without surrender of subject matter.

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants submit that all now-pending claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests the passage of all now-pending claims to Issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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